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И
СРЕДНЕВЕКОВАЯ
МЕТАФИЗИКА

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**III. СРЕДНЕВЕКОВЫЙ АРИСТОТЕЛИЗМ:
НА ПЕРЕПУТЬЕ ТРАДИЦИИ И БОГОСЛОВСКИХ ШКОЛ.
(MEDIEVAL ARISTOTELISM: AT THE CROSS-ROADS
OF TRADITIONS AND THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS)**

<i>Hieronymus Gregory (Basil Lourié)</i> An Aristotelian Ontology around the Proclean Hērēad: the Theology of Barlaam of Calabria and its Byzantine Background.....	137
<i>Koumantis A. P.</i> Introduction to John Damascene's Dialectics.....	145
<i>Athanasopoulos A. G.</i> Scholastic and Byzantine Realism: Absolutism in the Metaphysics and Ethics of Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Ockham and the critique of St. Gregory Palamas.....	154
<i>Shirinian M. E.</i> Armenian translation of [Aristotle's] De virtutibus et virtutibus.....	166
<i>Чумакова Т. В.</i> Рецепция Аристотеля в древнерусской культуре.....	172
<i>Овчинникова Е. А.</i> Традиции аристотелизма в становлении этической науки в России в конце XVII - начале XVIII в. в.....	184
<i>Нопайтас О. Е.</i> Традиции Иоанна Дамаскина в русской средневековой философии.....	191

**IV. АРИСТОТЕЛЬ И ЕГО УЧЕНИЕ
В ПЕРСПЕКТИВЕ СОВРЕМЕННОСТИ.
(ARISTOTLE AND HIS TEACHING
IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF MODERNITY)**

<i>Pozdnev M. M.</i> Catharsis in the Mid-16 th century (First Renaissance comments on the Aristotelian definition of tragedy).....	199
<i>McCay-Morrissey N. B.</i> OP The notion of hexis in Aristotle's ethics, St Thomas Aquinas' 'Summa theologiae' and selected Contemporary Virtue Theorists.....	209
<i>Вегис Х. М.</i> Между Афинами и Иерусалимом. Новые Средние века?.....	223
<i>Лопашков Р. А.</i> Декарт и средневековый аристотелизм.....	233
<i>Малеганский Д. В.</i> Структура психологической способности как объект исследования у Аристотеля и Канта.....	246
<i>Баламиев И. И.</i> Бытие и становление: От Аристотеля к Анри Бергсону.....	255
Обзор опубликованных тезисов (Some Abstracts).....	264
Об авторах.....	296
About the Authors.....	298

От редакции.

Данное издание альманаха Центра изучения средневековой культуры представляет доклады участников международной конференции «Аристотель и средневековая метафизика», которая была организована коллективом Центра и проходила на философском факультете Санкт-Петербургского государственного университета в октябре 2001 года. В её работе принимали участие исследователи из Армении, Бельгии, Голландии, Греции, Израиля, Ирландии, Киргизии и, конечно же, России. Прошедшая конференция стала важным этапом в исследовательской программе Центра. Надеемся, что завязавшиеся научные контакты и публикация материалов конференции позволят реализовать в будущем новые перспективные проекты и расширить исследовательские горизонты в иных направлениях.

Как известно, интерес к изучению аристотелизма на Западе всегда был велик, однако в последние годы он особенно возрос, появились фундаментальные историко-философские работы, целые серии новых изданий оригинальных сочинений, отражающие разнообразие и широту философского наследия Стагирита и его многочисленных средневековых комментаторов. Некоторые шаги в данном направлении предпринимаются и российскими учёными. В этой связи члены исследовательского коллектива Центра изучения средневековой культуры видели главную задачу прошедшей конференции в том, чтобы представить традиции метафизики аристотелизма в широком контексте европейской культуры как уникальный феномен философского международного сотрудничества, межрелигиозного общения и богословского взаимодействия в рамках эпохи Средневековья. Таким образом, российская философская медиевистика активно включается в европейские историко-философские программы исследований, что, надеемся, сможет продемонстрировать предлагаемое собрание трудов участников конференции.

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СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

От редакции.....	5
Preface.....	6

I. НАСЛЕДИЕ СТАГИРИТА:**ОТ АНТИЧНОСТИ К СРЕДНИМ ВЕКАМ.****(THE HERITAGE OF ARISTOTLE:****FROM THE ANTIQUITY TO THE MIDDLE AGES).**

Спицин Я. А. Аристотелевский принцип индивидуации	7
Галак Н. В. Поэма этического: Аристотель и Плутарх	18
Тонанн Л. Г. Римская судьба наследия Аристотеля (от Цицерона до Боэция)	27
Лисанюк Е. Н. Боэций о значении искусства топикки (На материале трактата «О различных топах»)	46
Goris H. Reception of Aristotle's De Interpretatione 9 in the Latin West: Boethius and the Scholastics	63
Geybels H. At the Gates of the Middle Ages: Augustine's Reception of Aristotle	71

II. РЕЦЕПЦИЯ АРИСТОТЕЛИЗМА**В СРЕДНЕВЕКОВОЙ СХОЛАСТИКЕ.****(RECEPTION OF THE ARISTOTELISM****IN THE MEDIEVAL SCHOLASTICS).**

Rikhof H. W. M. The Creativity of a Theologian. Aquinas' Theological Transformation of the Aristotelian Concept of Virtue	89
Tolstenko A. M. Eriugena's «ontological grammar»	100
Душин О. Э. Philosophus: между «Англическим Доктором» и Реформатором	111
Федчук Д. А. Сущность «составного» у Аристотеля и её томистская интерпретация	118
Смирнова А. А. Влияние аристотелизма позднего Средневековья на воззрения Мейстера Экхарта	129

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От редакции.....	5
Preface.....	6

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Аристотеля (от Цицерона до Боэция)	27
Лисанюк Е. Н. Боэций о значении искусства топик	46
(На материале трактата «О различных топиках»)	46
Goris H. Reception of Aristotle's De Interpretatione 9 in the Latin West:	
Boethius and the Scholastics	63
Geybels H. At the Gates of the Middle Ages:	
Augustine's Reception of Aristotle	71

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Смирнова А. А. Влияние аристотелизма позднего Средневековья	
на воззрения Мейстера Экхарта	129

Preface.

Given edition of the almanac of the Center of Medieval Culture Studies represents all reports of the participants of the international conference "Aristotle and medieval metaphysics", which was organized by collective of the Center and passed at Philosophical Faculty of the St.-Petersburg State University in October, 2001. The researchers from Armenia, Belgium, Holland, Greece, Israel, Ireland, Kirghizia and, certainly, Russia took part in its work. The past conference has become the important stage in the research program of the Center. We hope that the fastening scientific contacts and publication of materials of a conference will allow to realize in the future the new perspective projects and to expand research horizons in other directions.

As is known, the interest to study Aristotelism in West was always great. However last years it especially has increased: the fundamental historic-philosophical works, whole series of the new editions of the original treatises reflecting a variety and breadth of a philosophical heritage Aristotle and his numerous medieval commentaries have appeared. Some steps in the given direction are undertaken also by Russian medievalists. In this connection members of the Center of Medieval Culture Studies saw the main task of this conference in presenting traditions of metaphysics of the Aristotelism as a unique phenomenon of philosophical international cooperation, interreligious dialogue and theological interaction in the epoch of a Middle Ages. Thus, Russian medievalists actively are included in the European historic-philosophical programs of researches that, we hope, can show complete proceedings of the participants of a conference.

I. НАСЛЕДИЕ СТАГИРИТА: ОТ АНТИЧНОСТИ К СРЕДНИМ ВЕКАМ.

Я. А. Слинин

АРИСТОТЕЛЕВСКИЙ ПРИНЦИП ИНДИВИДУАЦИИ.

Во второй главе «Категорий» Аристотель делит всё существующее на четыре класса. Он начинает с того, что говорится о каком-нибудь подлежащем, но ни в каком подлежащем не находится. Например, человек: об отдельном человеке говорится как о человеке, но человек вообще содержится ни в одном отдельном человеке. Затем Аристотель выделяет то, что находится в подлежащем, но ни о каком подлежащем не говорится. Примерами тут могут служить определенное умение читать и писать, которым обладает какой-нибудь отдельный человек, или определенное белое – цвет его тела. К третьему классу существующего Стагирит относит то, что и говорится о подлежащем, и содержится в подлежащем. Это, например, знание. Обо всяком умении читать и писать говорится как о знании, содержится же оно в душе знающего человека. Наконец, последний класс существующего охватывает всё то, что не находится ни в каком подлежащем и ни о каком подлежащем не говорится. Например: отдельный человек или отдельная лошадь. Только то, что относится к этому последнему классу, обладает, согласно Аристотелю, самостоятельным и независимым существованием; существование того, что входит в первые три выделенных Стагиритом класса, так или иначе зависит от существования отдельных вещей.

Существующее, входящее либо в первый, либо в четвертый из вышеописанных классов, относится к категории сущности. В пятой главе «Категорий» Аристотель пишет: «Сущность, называемая так в самом основном, первичном и безусловном смысле, — это та, которая не говорится ни о каком подлежащем и не находится ни в каком подлежащем, как, например, отдельный человек или отдельная лошадь». А вторыми сущностями называются те, к которым как к видам принадлежат сущности, называемые так в первичном смысле, — и эти виды и их роды; например, отдельный человек принадлежит к виду «человек», а род для этого вида — «живое существо». («Категории» 5, 2а 11-18). То, что относится к категории сущности, характеризует суть бытия вещей. Сущность вещи — это ее субстанция.

SCHOLASTIC AND BYZANTINE REALISM:
ABSOLUTISM IN THE METAPHYSICS AND ETHICS OF
AQUINAS, DUNS SCOTUS, OCKHAM AND THE CRITIQUE
OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS.

What I shall try to do in this paper is to investigate a particular characteristic of some of the main trends in Medieval and Scholastic Metaphysics and Ethics (as exhibited in the major works of Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus and William of Ockham). This characteristic I term «absolutism» and by this term I mean not the traditional definition of the philosophical term «absolutism» (i.e., absolute idealism, or the theory that claims that the world can be equated with objective or absolute thought, rather than with the personal flux of experience¹), but a particular interpretation of this term which exists both in the realm of philosophy and the realm of theology: Being is good, and the absolutely perfect Being (God) is absolutely Good. The Absolute Goodness of Being (God) forces upon us an absolute way of doing good, one way which does not admit exceptions in the methodology of being good. Ethics is related to Metaphysics and especially Ontology (since God is the only being which truly exists) in an absolute way, i.e., one way not allowing exceptions. I shall try to touch upon some of the major characteristics of the later Medieval Scholastic absolutism (mentalism, intuitionism, voluntarism, realism and the problem of universals), and I shall discuss them in the context of St. Gregory Palamas' attack on Varlaam, Akindynos and Gregoras.

In Medieval Philosophy, and most paradigmatically in the works of Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-74), John Duns Scotus (c.1266-1308) and William of Ockham (c.1285-1349), we see a firm belief that Ethics (i.e., the theory about what we ought to do in a given situation) is related to that area of Metaphysics generally known as Ontology (i.e., the theory about what we believe that exists) in a peculiar and idiosyncratic way: What exists absolutely is absolutely good and forces upon us what we ought to do in an absolute way, i.e., a way without generally allowing exceptions.

In Thomas Aquinas we see this quite clearly if we consider the following four positions:

His position about the identity of essence and existence in God: «It is therefore impossible for God's existence to differ from his essence» and «His essence is therefore his existence» (*Summa Th.*, I, q.3, a.4, c. Mary T. Clark translation²). In this theory, Aquinas believes that not only God has absolute existence, but that He is the only being in whose existence and essence are one and the same thing.

His position that existence is perfection: «To exist is the most perfect thing of all, for compared to existence, everything else is potential» (*Summa Th.* I, q.4, a.1, ad.3).

His position that God is infinite perfection: «In God exists the perfection of all things. On account of this, we call his perfection 'all-encompassing'» (*Summa Th.*, I, q.4, a.2).

His position that God is goodness: «Goodness is found above all with God, for goodness follows upon desirability. Now, beings desire their perfection; and the perfection and form of an effect are images of its cause, since whatever anything does expresses what it is. So the cause itself is desirable and can be called «good», a share in imaging it being desired. Evidently, therefore, since God is the First Active Cause of all things, goodness and desirability appropriately belong to him.» (*Summa Th.*, I, q.6, a.1, c., and ad. 2, 3). According to Aquinas God is the only being who is by nature good: «For anything must be perfect to be called 'good'... But this threefold perfection belongs by nature only to God, not to anything caused; for He alone exists by nature, accidents not being added to him (power, wisdom, and so forth belonging to him by nature, whereas in other things they are accidental) (*Summa Th.*, I, q.6, a.1, c.). Aquinas elaborates further upon his position that God is goodness in an absolute way by claiming that the created are not good in the same way as God is: «Although all things are good insofar as they exist, yet existence is not the nature of anything created, and so it does not follow that created things are by nature good» (ibid. ad.2) and that «The goodness of any created thing is not its nature, but something additional... This added goodness, however, is said to be good exactly as it is said to exist. Now, it is said to exist in a certain way, not as something that is existence. And so it is said to be good because what it possesses is goodness».

Thus, in Aquinas, contemplation upon what exists in reality brings us upon the only being in which existence is its essence (i.e., God) and in addition this being is perfectly Good and it exercises upon us a force or drive to be like Him, i.e., to be perfectly Good, even though we know that we can never be like Him: i.e., perfectly Good by nature, since created beings can never be good by nature, but as an added characteristic on their essence. Aquinas however, has also a theory on how man is to approach God in goodness: Thus, in his *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics* I, lect.9, Aquinas, following here Aristotle, claims that «if we inquire what is the good intended in any art or any enterprise, it should be known that the good is that for whose sake all else is done.» He also claims that «if we immediately discover an end to which all that is done in the human arts and works is directed, then such an end will be the good that is worked for, absolutely and this ultimate end of man is called the human good, which is happiness». Now this happiness according to Aquinas is exactly our intellectual vision of God, i.e., an intellectual act: In his *De debated Questions VIII*, q.9, a.19, c., he claims: «Now, the end of our desire is God. So the act by which we are primarily united to him is originally and essentially our happiness. But through the

act of the intellect we are primarily united to him, and so the vision of God, which is an intellectual act, is essentially and originally our happiness.»

I have described elsewhere the thomistic ways of understanding the world and God's and man's relation to it.³ What really is important to note here is this absolutism in his moral ontology and (moral) knowledge of the good: i.e., his belief that what exists absolutely is absolutely good and forces upon us what we ought to do in an absolute way, i.e., a way without generally allowing exceptions.

Let us now see very briefly John Duns Scotus' ethical system. In John Duns Scotus we see a differentiation from Aquinas' model and general outlook on ethics on the issue of divine will. Let us firstly see in a general outlook Duns Scotus source of Ethics. Duns Scotus believes that a good action must conform to the right reason: «To attribute moral goodness is to attribute conformity with right reason» (*Opus Ox.*, 2, 40, q.1, 2-3). The first principle which this conformity with right reason dictates is: «God ought to be loved» (*Ox.*, 2, 41, 4). This love to God forces upon us the obedience to His commands. In this way His commands are good and man's ethical life depends on God's will in a special and very specific way: «the divine will is the cause of good, and so by the fact that He wills something it is good...» (*Rep. Paris.*, 1, 48, q.1). In this general outlook moral law does not depend on the final end of the vision of God, but on the strict obedience to the law of God, which our love forces upon us. And this law of God is not dependent on profound metaphysics, but on the act of the Divine Will. Of course Duns Scotus does not go to the point of claiming that God makes His commands arbitrarily or by caprice. There are some things that God cannot will since it is not in His nature to will them. And the commands He makes for humans have also to take into account the fact that they must not be against the natural law which human correct reason recognises (*Rep.*, 2, 22, q. 1, 3). Nevertheless the fact remains that we do not have here the intellectualism or mentalism in Ethics evidenced in Aquinas' system. The difference however, is not radical. Both recognise the need to place God and His will under certain limitations. This difference is sufficient to see in Duns Scotus a mixture of ethical rationalism and voluntarism.⁴ In relation to our initial claim of absolutism we can see that Duns Scotus is as absolutist as Thomas Aquinas. This we can see in relation to Duns Scotus' claim that a moral act must not only be free, but it must conform to right reason (*recta ratio*). Now since through our love to God (characteristic moral action) we try to come close to God and will what He wills, it is evident that the right reason which must direct our actions is and must be in the final analysis the *recta ratio* of God. Duns Scotus' whole discussion of God's existence and the way we can know Him (by our natural powers and by His effects, i.e., rationally and *a posteriori*, see *Prolog.* 3, no.1-6) specifies the technical details of this obedience to the divine *recta ratio* as well as his critique of Henry of Ghent's position on the illumination theory (*Ox.*, 1, 3, 4, nos.2-5), i.e., that no

special illumination is required from us to know God, are proofs that not only the *recta ratio* is God's *ratio*, but that we can know this *ratio*. And how this can be so, while it can not be done absolutely, i.e., without exceptions and in a manner similar to God's existence? (Of course here one may cite Scotus' solution to *univocatio* as an escape from such an absolutism, i.e., there is room for a difference according to perfection, but this is not sufficient to refute the claim that imperfection granted the imperfect can know the perfect).⁵

In William of Ockham we can see a complete opposition to Aquinas' mentalism. According to Ockham the most profound condition of human moral action is freedom. Freedom (i.e., the power *ex* which I can indifferently and contingently produce an effect in such a way that I can cause or not cause that effect, without any difference in that power having been made) (*Quodlibet*, 1, 16) influences human will and allows the will to influence moral judgements and will what is against our final end (for example in the cases where the final end is impossible to be attained or highly improbable) (*1 Sent.*, 1, 4, 5). According to Ockham we are responsible for our actions because of our freedom: at any given time we can choose to follow God's commands and act morally or not follow them and act immorally. In Ockham as well as Aquinas and Duns Scotus God's commands place an obligation on us to follow them. Actually in Ockham the force of the obligation is in the realm of metaphysics: we as created *will* what the Creator wills. If we do not will what the Creator wills (and we have the freedom to do so) we will our self-destruction, since the one who made us knows us better than us. To do what God wills is the expression of our love and faith in His existence as Creator. God however, since He is uncreated, he is not bound by any obligation to do anything. He is absolutely free from all and any metaphysical or rationalistic restrictions and He can will anything He wishes (including the hatred of his creations) with the only restriction that He cannot will a contradiction. (*2 Sent.*, 19, P). In Ockham's theory then we can see a complete rejection of Aquinas' mentalism and Duns Scotus rationalism. Ockham's system tends towards a form of extreme voluntarism, since human ethics depends upon the will and volition of God.⁶ In this system God's freedom is absolute and so is man's obligation to obey what God freely decides for him.

In the above association of Ethics to Metaphysics and Logic, it is evident, I think, that taking a particular ethical position entails that one is also committed to a particular metaphysics and ontology. Taking now the particular ethical positions which we examined above this means that Aquinas' mentalism in ethics commits him to an independent existence of his values and their sources, while Ockham's voluntarism commits him to the ontological dependence of his values upon divine and/or human will, with Duns Scotus' ethical rationalism standing somewhere in-between.⁷ The important issue however is that both thomistic mentalism and ockhamistic voluntarism base their moral-ontological commit-

act of the intellect we are primarily united to him, and so the vision of God, which is an intellectual act, is essentially and originally our happiness.»

I have described elsewhere the thomistic ways of understanding the world and God's and man's relation to it.³ What really is important to note here is this absolutism in his moral ontology and (moral) knowledge of the good: i.e., his belief that what exists absolutely is absolutely good and forces upon us what we ought to do in an absolute way, i.e., a way without generally allowing exceptions.

Let us now see very briefly John Duns Scotus' ethical system. In John Duns Scotus we see a differentiation from Aquinas' model and general outlook on ethics on the issue of divine will. Let us firstly see in a general outlook Duns Scotus source of Ethics. Duns Scotus believes that a good action must conform to the right reason: «To attribute moral goodness is to attribute conformity with right reason» (*Opus Ox.*, 2, 40, q.1, 2-3). The first principle which this conformity with right reason dictates is: «God ought to be loved» (*Ox.*, 2, 41, 4). This love to God forces upon us the obedience to His commands. In this way His commands are good and man's ethical life depends on God's will in a special and very specific way: «the divine will is the cause of good, and so by the fact that He wills something it is good...» (*Rep. Paris.*, 1, 48, q.1). In this general outlook moral law does not depend on the final end of the vision of God, but on the strict obedience to the law of God, which our love forces upon us. And this law of God is not dependent on profound metaphysics, but on the act of the Divine Will. Of course Duns Scotus does not go to the point of claiming that God makes His commands arbitrarily or by caprice. There are some things that God cannot will since it is not in His nature to will them. And the commands He makes for humans have also to take into account the fact that they must not be against the natural law which human correct reason recognises (*Rep.*, 2, 22, q. 1, 3). Nevertheless the fact remains that we do not have here the intellectualism or mentalism in Ethics evidenced in Aquinas' system. The difference however, is not radical. Both recognise the need to place God and His will under certain limitations. This difference is sufficient to see in Duns Scotus a mixture of ethical rationalism and voluntarism.⁴ In relation to our initial claim of absolutism we can see that Duns Scotus is as absolutist as Thomas Aquinas. This we can see in relation to Duns Scotus' claim that a moral act must not only be free, but it must conform to right reason (*recta ratio*). Now since through our love to God (characteristic moral action) we try to come close to God and will what He wills, it is evident that the right reason which must direct our actions is and must be in the final analysis the *recta ratio* of God. Duns Scotus' whole discussion of God's existence and the way we can know Him (by our natural powers and by His effects, i.e., rationally and *a posteriori*, see *Prolog.* 3, no.1-6) specifies the technical details of this obedience to the divine *recta ratio* as well as his critique of Henry of Ghent's position on the illumination theory (*Ox.*, 1, 3, 4, nos.2-5), i.e., that no

special illumination is required from us to know God, are proofs that not only the *recta ratio* is God's *ratio*, but that we can know this *ratio*. And how this can be so, while it can not be done absolutely, i.e., without exceptions and in a manner similar to God's existence? (Of course here one may cite Scotus' solution to *univocatio* as an escape from such an absolutism, i.e., there is room for a difference according to perfection, but this is not sufficient to refute the claim that imperfection granted the imperfect can know the perfect).⁵

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ments on humanly attainable knowledge, i.e., knowledge which differs radically (ontologically) from the one evidenced in God. Duns Scotus' rationalism is no better on this issue, since the *ratio* we can have can never be the same as the one God has. The problem associated in this way with the above mentioned giants of medieval scholasticism may be put like this: If what exists absolutely is absolutely good and forces upon us what we ought to do in an absolute way two conditions have to be met (necessarily but not sufficiently): a) we must be able to be aware of this in an infallible way, and b) we must all be the same (i.e., no significant variations should exist between people). For the first condition to be met we need two assurances: firstly that God really is Good and His Goodness must be something that can be discovered by us, and secondly that we can acknowledge His existence and receive in a certain and infallible way this force of Goodness. Now, that God is Good can only be known via His definition and our faith. That we can acknowledge His existence is also a matter of accepting the validity of the arguments in favour of His existence and also a matter of faith. However, that we can receive in a certain and infallible way this force of Goodness is highly disputable both in philosophy and in theology (scepticism on our rational capacity and the whole corpus of the mystical tradition of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and the Desert Fathers of the early Church, coupled by scriptural evidence) are against such a certain reception. The (b) condition is equally well in high dispute. The very notion of personhood in Christian Theology (especially in the works of St. Athanasius the Great, St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Maximus the Confessor) as well as the maxims of existential philosophy and the later Wittgenstein, are indicating significant variations among people, which do not accommodate such hasty generalisations.

St. Gregory Palamas (1296-1359) formulated a theological and philosophical system to provide a comprehensive and consistent response to the attack on 14th century Hesychasm instigated by the monk Varlaam of Kalavria (1290-1350). This system provides an alternative to the above mentioned scholastic account on the relation of man to God and the world. Palamas' follower the monk Kallistos Angelikoudes (c.1350-c.1440) applied the system of Palamas and made a specific critique on some of the main positions of Thomas Aquinas. In the works of St. Gregory Palamas and his followers Nikolaos Kavasilas and Kallistos Angelikoudes we see a consistent account of how man can engage in an appropriate relation to the world, his fellow men and God.¹ Here only one very brief account of the main positions of Palamas (who studied Aristotle's metaphysics, ethics and logic with the great late Byzantine Aristotelian scholar Theodorus Metochites at the University of Constantinople and received high praises from the Emperor himself in a public philosophical competition) and Angelikoudes can be given.² In Gregory Palamas' work entitled "Two Apodeictic Orations", he first of all puts forward the position that in the way we talk and write about God and the

Holy Trinity we must use *apodeictic* arguments, i.e., arguments based on the Biblical and Patristic texts, and not *dialectic* arguments, i.e., arguments based on comparisons, reason, philosophical opinions and non-religious beliefs. His argument is that any discussion of items of faith, should be based on how close to the faith a specific view is, and not how much this view accommodates beliefs from other endeavours, such as philosophy, and the other sciences. Also, the dialectic method, by comparing two different opinions with equal more or less truth, is not concerned with the truth of the Fathers, which is one and independent of any comparisons. Using this methodological foundation and in relation to the issue of the Filioque (which is not accepted by the Orthodox) Palamas attacked one of the main doctrinal positions of Catholicism as exhibited in the writings of Aquinas on the Holy Trinity. In particular and specifically in relation to disputed characteristics of the Holy Spirit, he attacked the famous position in *Summa Theologiae* summarised in the phrase "*personae sunt ipsae relationes*" (I, q.40, art.2). St. Gregory claimed that relations are not and cannot be persons. Relations can only be at their best the personal characteristics of Father, Son, and Spirit. As St. Gregory put it: "personal characteristics do not constitute the person, but they characterise the person". The relations while designating the persons, in no way exhaust the mystery of each. This mystery cannot be proven by Ontological Arguments on the Existence of God. It is a lived experience, and a lived experience that can occur in this world. The proof of God's existence according to the Orthodox Church is the existence of the Church itself. Following and extending the tradition of Hesychasm St. Gregory Palamas enlarged on the nature of this lived experience of direct awareness of God. Hesychasts believed, following St. Gregory of Nyssa, that God could not be seen nor be understood. The only way we can experience God according to Hesychasts, following here St. Simeon the New Theologian, was through the mystical experience of the vision of Divine and Uncreated Light, like the light on Mt. Tabor. To defend the Hesychastic positions against Varlaam's attacks, St. Gregory reaffirms the Biblical account of man and the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, claiming that man as a whole, in his totality of body and mind, was created in the image of God. Man's body is not an enemy but a partner and collaborator with the soul. Christ, by taking the human body, has made it an inexhaustible source of sanctification. The fact that humans have material body is not an obstacle in uniting with God, but it further augments the purpose of deification of man. Thought, belonging in this body, and not something exterior and abstract from it, becomes thus an aid in our journey towards God. Thought, to be kept in the body, and not become independent from the corruptible and material body, must be concentrated in the heart, and in order to achieve this we have to train body and mind through Hesychastic practices such as fasting, vigils, humility and incessant prayer, cleansing thus our heart and mind continuously. Our intellectual capabilities are by far too

limited for the vision of God. What we need is all our human powers and efforts, and this can only be done through the heart, which encapsulates all our human being; vision of God can be accomplished only through the heart, since the heart is by far superior to the intellect or the body. We can know God through his energies (*energeia*) and not his essence (*ousia*). God's essence is something that we can never see nor comprehend, as it was written by St. Gregory of Nyssa, being something infinite, indivisible, incomprehensible, and transcendental; God's energies however, flowing from His essence through his grace are and can be revealed to humans. These energies are not created gifts, nor something that exists apart from God; they are God Himself in His action and revelation in the world. God exists complete and entire in each of His divine energies. Through his energies God enters in a direct and immediate relationship with human kind; in relation to man the divine energy is nothing else but the grace of God. Grace is not just a gift nor a creation from God, but it is a direct manifestation of the living God Himself, a personal confrontation of Creator and creature. Grace in the form of the uncreated energy of the Holy Spirit has to be uncreated for two reasons: first because otherwise it could not deify man, and second because no created thing may unite truly with human soul; also it has to be energy and not essence for two reasons: the Holy Spirit in its essence is incomprehensible and infinite and unapproachable by anyone and anything except God Himself, thus the soul of man cannot access and share it; the other reason is that if it was a substance of some sort, it could not fill and penetrate the soul and through the soul the whole man. The Orthodox and St. Gregory Palamas say that those who receive the sacraments receive the created means of the transmission of the uncreated grace of God for their deification, and that the saints are deified through the grace of God. What is meant by *deification through the grace of God* is that the people concerned have a *direct experience of God*, they know Him and unite with Him. They know Him in His energies and not His essence. The Orthodox view of Grace is in total opposition to the Thomistic, the Scotistic and the Ockhamistic one. God is light, and thus the experiences of God's energies by the Hysenchasts takes the form of the vision of uncreated light, the God Himself. The light on Mt. Tabor was this kind of light. This light does not come and go, nor does it depend on our good visual perception; it is a light for the spirit, and once it comes makes its effect on the spirit permanent. The people who see this light live with God within them. God is continually present in this world through his energies who for man are acts of grace from his Creator. The gap between creation and Creator thus is bridged, and God communicates continuously and directly with creation (with no need for logic, ratio nor a human intellect). We cannot but notice immediately here the similarity and difference of St. Gregory's and Aquinas' positions on grace. Both believe that grace in human terms is communication with God, but while Aquinas thinks that this communication is in the intel-

lectualistic terms of first principles, and union of created intellect with God, St. Gregory has no intellectualistic tendencies, and claims that this communication is vision of God from our whole being. All our being gets illuminated and deified according to St. Gregory, while according to Aquinas we unite with God only through our (fallible) intellect. According to St. Gregory there is a great difference between Theology (*theologia*), which means talking about God, and *Theoptia* (seeing God), with our whole being. Theology can use language, reasoning, and arguments derived from the Fathers to talk about God. *Theoptia* however, is an experience so mystical and so transcendental that it is incommunicable. We shall know it only when we have it. We can only hear and imagine about it from what the living saints, the people who live in this state, divulge it to us, and read it from the writings of saints. Inherent in Orthodox tradition and the expression of that tradition in St. Gregory is a particular view of man, which in places is in total contradiction to the view of the Thomists, the Scotists or the Ockhamists. But before we reach the point of comparison of the metaphysics of man for these two traditions let us have St. Gregory's account of man. It is important to note from the start, that the best example of a human being, which for St. Gregory and Orthodoxy are the living saints, modelling their lives according to the life of Christ and the Apostles, is not that of an intellectual. For St. Gregory and the Orthodox the man of acute intellectual capabilities is more prone to be leading himself and other people astray, than achieve something positive for himself or others. The worldly wisdom in terms of philosophy, science, and all its other branches are suited for the spiritually adolescent and not for the spiritually mature and perfect examples of men. The status of saints is one of rapture, a state of incessant and acute love and desire to unite with God, and be continuously one with Him. There is no room for intellectual sobriety in such a relation. It is faith in its most literal sense, foreign to the intellectualism or mentalism of Thomas Aquinas, the voluntarism of Ockham and the rationalism of Duns Scotus. The mode of relation is not the intellectual nor the logical but the emotional. We are transferred from the domain of the logical realism which is the Thomistic domain, and the domain we live our worldly lives in, to the domain of mystical and emotional realism. Emotion, and here in particular Love and divine passion, is what forces the will to act in a way that supersedes all logic, and all intellectual possibilities, and recommendations. Note however, that this mystic emotional realism is far from the Ockhamistic voluntarism instigated by human will. In order for the human will to have control over such a transformation it needs to have absolute power over emotions and feelings. Here however, emotions and feelings, the literal drive and thirst of human heart to unite with God are uncontrollable and inexpressible, let alone logically describable (just contemplate on the martyr's drive to not run away at the approach of a tiger or a lion at the Coliseum). Instead of clearing his mind from falsehood, the man of St. Gregory and

Orthodoxy clears his heart from improper emotions, and passions, and he tries to develop in his heart the proper emotions and passions that shall make his heart relate to God and his fellow human beings. If the heart, which represents the whole man and not only his mind, is not clean then any intellectual activity is bound to be false, and misguided through the influence of an improper passion or emotion. The mind was given from God to man, but through the development of the wrong kind of passions and emotions, the mind is totally corrupted, and darkened to the point of being nothing else but a cause of mistaken and false beliefs. St. Gregory's mixing of St. Macarius of Egypt, and his Jewish influences on the importance of the heart, with the Neo-Platonic influences of St. Evagrius of Pontus, and St. Gregory of Nyssa, according to Georgios Mantzarides is adequately developed by Palamas, involving the following reasoning: the difference between the view that the position of the intellect is in the heart, and the view that the intellect is incorporeal and cannot be limited corporally in this way, is external and superficial. Just as the God cannot be limited in any place, but still take the human flesh and become localised in one of His persons, so the incorporeal intellect uses the heart as its primary and most important instrument making it a treasury of intelligence¹⁰. Jean Meyendorff in the same way, characterises St. Gregory's views on the intellect and the soul as the answer and protection of the Eastern Church to the "disease of Nominalism" which would have soon enough a devastating effect in the West¹¹. In his "Epistle to the Nun Xenia", as well as in other places through out his works, we see Palamas discussing in more detail in its natural condition the human soul is perfectly healthy and truly in the image of God. It has three facets and corresponding powers: Intellect, Logos, and Spirit. Human intellect, through the spirit and the logos, contains and vitalises the body, endowing it with creative power. In this respect, natural man is higher than angels. The image of angels, not having the connection of the spirit and the intellect with the body, is inferior to man, because it lacks this creative power of the connection with a body. This relation of the intellect, logos, and the spirit, is the true image of the Holy Trinity God, both in the body, and the soul of man. Man is the only one among the creation that has this image of the Trinity God, with the rest of creation being inferior to man in this respect. Separation from God is sin, which in Orthodoxy signals the true death of the deathless and immortal soul, and the body. It is in man's power to disobey the natural craving for God, and exercising his freedom to evade the union with God, and thus his transformation according to God's likeness. God is not the originator of the death of soul and body; man is. Through the influence of Satan Adam's fear and self-interest brought Adam and thus all humanity to sin, and thus bring death and evil in the world. By God's providence, which is another of His energies, however, the human soul cannot unite with any created thing, except the body in which it is united through conception. Thus the soul cannot unite with evil spirits and the

devil. It can unite with the Holy Spirit's energy however, since the Holy Spirit and its essence and energy are uncreated. Evil spirits and the devil can only fasten on the human soul, directing it through sin. With the help of Christ however, who was sent by God to give the means of escape from this spiritual death and evil, and return to God, we can destroy this attachment of the evil spirits and the devil, and unite with God, continuously regenerating ourselves spiritually. Tribulations, pain, misfortunes, all adversities for the Christian are considered *eschatologically*: they all work like purgative fire to purify the believer, who is made thus a more fit and receptive vessel for the Holy Spirit. The only truly bad thing in life is sin, and it comes solely from man. According to St. Gregory nothing except sin is truly bad in this world even though death and other adverse circumstances bring affliction to us. The soul, as it was mentioned above, has three facets, and is distinguished in three powers: of the reasoning, of the willing, and of the desiring. When the soul suffers under the lethal disease of sin, then all the parts of the soul suffer equally. If one part is diagnosed as suffering then all are suffering. According to St. Gregory, desire frustrated causes anger, and the disordered state of desire and anger distract the mind. Thus, if we want to cure the whole man from sin we should start from desire; there is an ordering of the healing process: the willing and the reasoning parts and powers will never be healed unless the desiring part and power is fully healed and transformed first. Also, the reasoning part and power shall never be healed and transformed, unless the other two, the desiring and the willing do not get transformed and healed first. Thus in the ordering of the healing process we start from Desires, we pass to the Will, and end with the Reason. In the desiring facet of the soul, St. Gregory distinguishes between desires which are natural and healthy, existing in man from birth and given to him by God, and unnatural, sinful, and filled with disease ones, that is, desires that through his will man altered and imposed on himself perverting his natural state. For all these perversions of our natural desires however, the first facet of our soul to blame is our mind or intellect, and in particular the image making and word making and using parts of the intellect. The intellect with images and words directs the will in the commitment of sin. Images are more potent sources of sin than words through their association with the powerful perception through the eyes. Without the interference of the Intellect and the Will, the natural Desires have no disease and perversion, and exist in a healthy state and relation to the rest of the human totality, as in little children. It is here that the great difference between Palamas and Aquinas and Ockham and Duns Scotus can be seen. While for the three great scholastics the intellect and the will are important in the fulfilment of man's final end and moral imperative, in St. Gregory Palamas the human intellect and will are obstacles for such a fulfilment. Our moral imperative for Palamas is that we have to fight all perversions on all fronts: in the Intellect with prayer, humility, and avoidance of input from the

senses that are secular in nature, and of perceptions, images and thoughts that do not relate and guide one to God, in the Will with voluntary hardships through lack of material possessions, fasting, and all night vigils, in the Desires, through not giving in to them, and extinguishing the thought and images of them. When all perverted desires are extinguished from the appetitive facet of the soul, then the mind is able to detach itself from its outward application, and return totally to itself together with the willing power and facet of the soul. Through the cultivation of virtues the intellect then can start the cleansing of itself by driving away all man-made ideas, thoughts, images and phantasies, including the good ones. When this process is completed man stands in front of God as "deaf and dumb" (*kafos kai alalos*), the grace of God can fill his heart, and through the heart uncreated divine energy permeates the soul and the body of man, turning the *kat'ekona* (according to the image) established with baptism to the *kath'omoiosin* (according to the likeness), which is and the final purpose of man's existence on earth. The heart that is blessed with uncreated light is transmitting this light to the rest of the man, and enables him to habituate the cultivation and perseverance of the virtues, and the avoidance thus of evil deeds and thoughts. This avoidance of evil (*diakinesis pros to kalo*) allows the heart to be taught by Christ Himself, the principles and reasons of beings (*logos onton*). The heart being totally clean absorbs the mysteries of nature, and comprehends what is above nature (*katavesti ton uper fysin*) with analogical syllogisms (*analogikous syllogismous*). With these abilities bestowed upon their hearts, the saints can foresee and become prophets, can perform miracles through the grace of God, and these powers stay with them and their bodies and souls even when their heart stops connecting their soul to a specific body. These abilities however, are not to distract the minds and the hearts of the saints who have attained through habit the concentration of mind and all their powers to their heart, but they should practice always the command of Christ to be "poor in spirit" (*ptochoi to pneuma*). The grace of God is using thus their hearts and their whole being for the glory of God.

From the above exposition it is clear that the differentiation between St. Gregory Palamas and the three great scholastics with which we started this paper is radical. The issue however, still remains: Can the philosophy and theology of St. Gregory Palamas escape the problems which haunt the absolutism evidenced in Thomistic mentalism, Scotistic rationalism and Ockhamistic voluntarism? The answer is yes. St. Gregory Palamas' system can in no way be termed absolutist. In this system the dictum «what exists absolutely is absolutely good and forces upon us what we ought to do in an absolute way» has no application. Since the perversion of one's desires and the darkening of his/her heart's powers is quite a personal affair, no general characterisation of the *modus vivendi* or each one's moral imperative is necessary. Mystical experience gains the first role in the moral ontology which will guide one to moral perfection through deification. A new form of absolutism emerges, one in which neither intellect nor will attempt

to secure the «absolute way» of human efforts for deification. In this mystical absolutism humanhood is lost «absolutely» for ever, and, suddenly, it is reinstated with the divine energy of God's grace.

COMMENTS

¹ See Simon Blackburn, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, Oxford: OUP, 1996 (1994), p.2.

² All the translations into English from Thomas Aquinas' texts are from the work: Mary T. Clark, ed., *An Aquinas Reader*, New York: Facultum University Press, 1971.

³ In C. Athanopoulos, «Anti-Thomism in Byzantine Philosophy: Metaphysics, Philosophy of Mind, and Moral Ontology in the Theological Opposition to Thomism and Scholasticism» (in English), in *Philosophy and Orthodoxy*, ed. by K. Boudouris, International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture, Athens, 1994, pp.41-93. For a Thomistic account of the relevant issues see Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, Oxford, 1992, pp.215-220, and Christopher Martin, *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas: Introductory Readings*, London and N.Y.: Routledge, 1988.

⁴ See A. B. Wolter, ed., *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality*, Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1987; Alexander Broadie, *The Shadow of Scotus: Philosophy and Faith in Pre-Reformation Scotland*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995.

⁵ See on this Stephen Dumont «Henry of Ghent and Duns Scotus», in John Marenbon, ed., *Medieval Philosophy*, London and N.Y.: Routledge, 1998, pp.291-322.

⁶ See T. M. Ilolapainen, *William Ockham's Theory of the Foundations of Ethics*, Helsinki: Publications of the Luther Academic Society, B20, 1991.

⁷ For a comprehensive analysis of the related terminology and characterizations see Broadie, *ibid.*, esp. pp.20-33.

⁸ See my above cited 1994 article and C. Athanopoulos, «Nature as *telos* in St. Gregory Palamas» (in Greek), in K. Boudouris, ed., *Ecology and Philosophy* (in Greek), Ionia Publications, Athens, 1999, pp.19-25; also C. Athanopoulos, «Epistemological Realism in the Thought of St. Gregory Palamas and the Byzantine Opposition to the Medieval Agnosticism and Skepticism» (in Greek), in K. Boudouris, ed., *Greek Epistemology*, Athens: Ionia Publications, 2001, pp.1-26.

⁹ See above my cited articles.

¹⁰ See Georgius Mantzardes, *The Deification of Man*, transl. by L. Sheppard, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, New York, 1984, pp.84-85.

¹¹ Jean Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Mystical Theology*, transl. E. Marnas, Akritas, 1989, p.123, pp.120-132, pp.148-150, original title: *St. Gregoire Palamas, et la mystique orthodoxe*, Du Seuil, 1999.